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Panel Physicians Offer Conflicting Opinions On Tobacco And Lung Cancer

2 Physicians Agree No Clear-Cut Proof Smoking Is Harmful

By LESLIE GRUBER
Farm Editor

Statements ranging in meaning from "there is a definite correlation between cigarette smoking and lung cancer" to "there is no clear-cut evidence that smoking causes lung cancer" sparked a panel discussion on that subject here Friday.

The panel, composed of Dr. Alton Ochsner of New Orleans, Dr. Douglas Sprunt of Memphis, Tenn., Dr. William Rienhoff, Baltimore, Dr. Cuyler Hammond, American Cancer Society, and moderator, Dr. George Lumb, Wilmington, appeared at the first meeting of the 14th annual medical symposium of the New Hanover County Medical Society.

Assets Proof Lacking

Dr. Sprunt and Dr. Rienhoff took the moderate view-point that while smoking probably never did anyone any good—clear-cut proof that it causes lung cancer is lacking.

Dr. Hammond and Dr. Ochsner took the stand that smoking definitely aids and abets lung cancer.

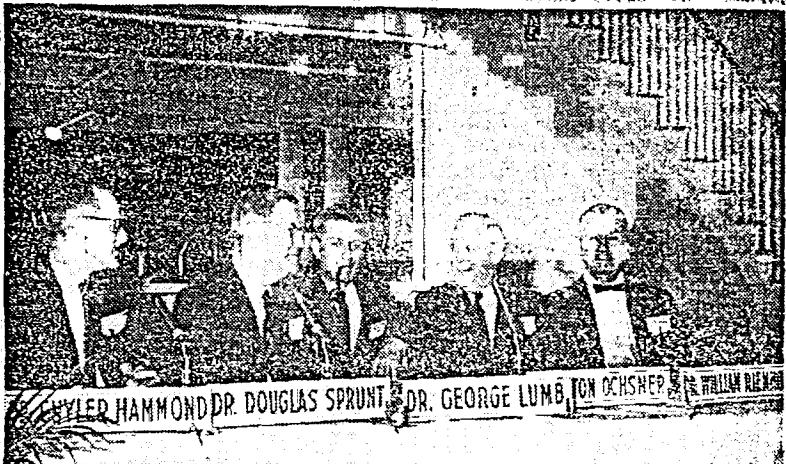
The discussion brought out questions of research methods and progress and more than anything, emphasized the wide divergence of opinion in scientific circles on the relationship of smoking to lung cancer.

Dr. Ochsner is chief of surgery of the Ochsner Clinic, New Orleans, and noted specialist in lung cancer. He said he had treated more than 1,600 patients with this disease.

Native Of Wilmington

Dr. Sprunt is a native of Wilmington. He is president-elect of the American Association of Pathologists and Bacteriologists and is chief of the department of pathology at the University of Tennessee.

Dr. Rienhoff did much of the pioneer work on lung surgery in the U. S., and with another surgeon, performed the first success-



CANCER-TOBACCO DISCUSSION —

Five doctors lead a panel discussion on the relationship between tobacco and lung cancer. They are, left to right: Dr. Cuyler Hammond of the American Cancer Society; Dr. Douglas Sprunt, professor of pathology at the University of Tennessee; Dr. Alton Ochsner, chief

surgery of the Ochsner Clinic at New Orleans, La. and Dr. William Rienhoff, professor of surgery at John Hopkins Medical School at Baltimore, Md. (SECO Photo)

ful lung removal operation. He is air that causes cancer. We should question is: a member of the American Board of objective and scientific in our "Is tobacco a harmful stimuli of Surgery and Thoracic Surgery studies."

Dr. Hammond is director of the statistical research section of the American Cancer Society.

Dr. Lumb is chief of pathology at James Walker Memorial Hospital in Wilmington.

Dr. Lumb traced the broad history of tobacco from its discovery in America by the Spaniards to the present.

Many Accusations

Through the years tobacco has been accused of causing numerous complaints, of curing numerous complaints and it has even been "accused of causing pleasure," the moderator added.

Dr. Lumb closed his introduction with:

"And while we listen to the experts discoursing on tobacco I propose to light my pipe and listen pleasantly through a cloud of aromatic smoke."

Dr. Rienhoff declared:

"We should get down to the work of finding out what there is in the

Dr. George Lumb of James Walker Memorial Hospital; Dr. Alton Ochsner, chief surgery of the Ochsner Clinic at New Orleans, La. and Dr. William Rienhoff, professor of surgery at John Hopkins Medical School at Baltimore, Md. (SECO Photo)

Now, people who have had irritating lung troubles such as claims on the cause of cancer.

"I feel the American Cancer Society should put stress on avoiding smoking to excess. Excessive smoking is harmful."

The speaker said there seem to be many factors involved in the cause of cancer, including genetic as well as environmental factors.

Moderate On Subject

With 80 per cent of the men smoking and 50 per cent of the women smoking and the incidence of the disease slight there must be some strongly individual reactions if the smoking causes cancer at all, he added.

Dr. Sprunt, also moderator on the subject, said cancer is a composite disease made up of many factors. There is a fundamental law of nature that "anything must have stimuli to survive."

Dr. Rienhoff declared:

"We should keep an open mind toward tobacco."

Dr. Hammond brought batteries of statistics to bear to support his contention that there is a direct connection between tobacco smok-

ing and lung cancer. The

Health efforts are aimed toward removing the harmful stimuli. The

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